Government role in privatised aviation sector

467. SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to privatise the aviation sector; and

(b) if so, what will be the future role of Civil Aviation Ministry/Airports Authority of India?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Government is encouraging increased private sector participation in the civil aviation sector.

(b) Government will continue to provide appropriate policy, legal and regulatory framework for safe, secure, efficient and widespread air-services. Airports Authority of India would also continue to discharge its present functions, except for privately managed airports where it would be responsible for air traffic control and airport security.

Probe into escalator accident at IGI Airport, Delhi

468. SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
MISS MABEL REBELLO:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:
SHRI C. M. IBRAHIM:
SHRI VAYALAR RAVI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the committee set up to probe the escalator accident at Indira Gandhi International Airport in December, 1999 has held the airport management and the escalator manufacturer OTIS responsible for the tragedy;

(b) whether the panel has found that the staff at the IGIA lacked alertness and sensitivity in handling the situation; and

(c) if so, what preventive steps Government proposes to avoid such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The following steps have been taken by Airports Authority of India to prevent recurrence of such incidents in future:—

(i) The escalator and other such equipment are being upgraded.

(ii) Instructions for use of such equipment have been displayed prominently for the benefit of the users; and

(iii) The staff of all the agencies at the airport have been imparted familiarisation training for use of such equipment and for dealing with any unforeseen situation.

Private participation in maintenance of airstrips

†469. SHRI D.P. YADAV: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry is preparing any draft proposal to hand over airstrips as well airport authorities to private companies for maintenance; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) It has been decided to restructure the airports of the Airports Authority of India as and when found suitable through long-term lease. At present, the existing airports at Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Calcutta are being taken up for this exercise.

The purpose of restructuring of airports is as under:—

(i) to improve the managerial efficiency;

(ii) to bring the standards of services/facilities at par with the international standards; and

(iii) to attract investments from private sector for (i) and (ii) above.

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*†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.